



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE BRIAN H. SEAR
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TO: Senator Doyle, Representative Baram
Members of the General Law Committee

RE: Proposed House Bill 5614

I am Brian Sear, Representative from the 47th District. I'm here to testify in support of Bill 5614, An Act Concerning E-Books and Libraries, which I am sponsoring. While the current wording of the bill only references cost equity, our goal is to ultimately provide fair access for all Libraries, of which cost plays a significant role.

Libraries of all types: Public, Academic, School, and Special, play an essential role in our society... providing information and resources to all of our population. This is not a static role; it is ever evolving. There is no downside to Libraries, and no segment of the population that is not served by them. Young, old, rich, poor, urban, rural... all of our population use libraries to access entertainment, professional development, research, and just plain curiosity.

Libraries serve society best when they provide a full range of information. Currently, due to technological and economic considerations, Libraries are being discriminated against in access to electronic books. There is no clear framework for providing this access, or agreement on a fair cost and/or licensing structure.

Rather than sitting on the sidelines waiting for some sort of market-based framework to evolve, if it ever would, we in Connecticut want to take the lead in creating a framework of fair and comprehensive access to e-books for all of our Libraries' patrons. Every day, throughout Connecticut, and the country, Library Directors and their staffs are faced with disappointed and frustrated patrons who want to know when, and what, titles will be available in electronic format for the books they want to read. Library Boards are similarly frustrated in trying to determine what resources to commit to e-books.

I believe fair and thoughtful Legislation will create a working system in Connecticut that will benefit all parties. Thank you for your consideration and willingness to address this exciting new proposal.